

Dear Commissioners:

I strongly disagree with any change in FCC policy that would loosen restrictions on broadcast ownership.

Arguments that cable, satellite, and the internet bring so many programming choices to the consumer, and that therefore negates the value of limiting ownership is totally beside the point and is in fact false. It has nothing to do with whether or not a broadcaster is sensitive to local issues, understands the local flavor of the culture, or cares enough about truly "serving local communities". The trends are clear. Consolidation of programming is destroying both diversity of opinion, and the "sense of community" that comes from more diverse and from more local ownership. That is why you were given this charge in the first place! Distant owners often have distant goals, opinions, and interests.

Look at what Clearchannel's (a harbinger of media ownership) consolidation has done to radio. They have cheapened the product, centralized the product, which has also taken jobs from the communities those licenses serve. And overall, radio itself has cheapened as a result of it. Advertising revenues have been going down since 1996. What would happen if they were to also own and control the local newspapers and television stations? A single corporate point of view, coming from a centralized authority, adhering to a single corporate policy- all at the expense of local jobs, local talent, local issues and political viewpoints. That is what we are increasingly seeing regardless of whether or not it comes from a cable or a satellite.

What a sad world where every restaurant is a Burger King. What a sad democracy where all of the broadcasters are owned by a small group of corporate owners that, if prevailing trends continue, will homogenize our national discourse, narrow our political debates, censor anything that is antithetical to their managers or their interests- all at the public's expense.

Where is the FCC when we need them? Where is your honor? What is your duty to us, the public? Diversity is good for a healthy democracy. Diversity of ownership is good for competition- the engine of capitalism. Good for programming choice. Consolidation of media is patently not. We only have recent history to look at.

Please DO NOT loosen any restrictions on media ownership. We have already seen the negative impact of what has been allowed to happen so far- and it has been ugly, and most certainly NOT in the public's best interests.

Respectfully,

Wes Headley
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